

**THE SUMMER BROOD (*F. ONERATELLA*) OF *CALOPTILIA FALCONIPENNELLA* HB. (LEP.: GRACILLARIIDAE) IN BRITAIN**

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ON 20 JULY 1993 I took at light in my garden, a *Caloptilia* which I did not recognise. It was similar in colour and appearance to *C. stigmatella* Fabr. but it had a pale yellow, oblong costal blotch unlike the characteristic off-white triangular blotch of that species. However, I decided it was a form of *stigmatella* and thought no more of it until a further six identical specimens turned up in my m.v. trap between 9 July and 8 August 1994. It then became apparent that I might have something new – at least to Britain. With the assistance of Mr Michael Shaffer of the Natural History Museum I was able to examine the collection of Palaearctic Gracillariidae and soon found a short series of moths under the name *Caloptilia oneratella* Zell., which matched my specimens.

Zeller described *Caloptilia oneratella* as a species new to science in 1865 but Kuznetsov (1990) states that *oneratella* Zell. is a form of *falconipennella* Hb. though does not mention that it is actually a seasonal form. Examination of the genitalia of one of my male specimens has confirmed that it is conspecific with *falconipennella*.

*C. falconipennella* has always been a rare species in Britain and most of the specimens in collections have been bred in the months of September/October from larvae collected in late August; others have been disturbed from hibernation during the winter months. Hibernated specimens are on the move again quite early in the year if the weather is mild and in 1995 I had several at light towards the end of March. According to the published information in Emmet (1985 & 1988) *falconipennella* is univoltine.

In April 1995 I visited Mr Ian Sims of Earley, near Reading and noticed among his bred series of *C. elongella* L. two undoubted *falconipennella* f. *oneratella* which he had bred in July 1994 from larvae found on alder *Alnus glutinosa* in June 1994 with the *elongella*. Although he thought them to be an unusual and rather small form of *elongella* he assumed they must be that species because they came from alder and the dates of feeding and emergence were wrong for typical *falconipennella* which, in any case, they did not resemble. In June 1995 I searched alder in Petts Wood and eventually found one cocoon (on 26 June) which produced a moth of the *oneratella* form on 18 July 1995; I was also able to confirm that the larval folds and cocoon are identical to those of typical *falconipennella*. Between 11 July and 8 August 1995 a further seven f. *oneratella* came to m.v. in my garden.

To summarise, f. *oneratella* Zell. is the first (summer) generation of *Caloptilia falconipennella* Hb. and appears in July/August from larvae

feeding on alder in May/June. The second (autumn) generation, typical *falconipennella*, appears in late September/ October from larvae feeding in August/September.

Prior to 1993 I only once found the larva of *falconipennella* at Petts Wood despite persistent searching over several years. By contrast, larvae were fairly common every September from 1993 to 1995 both at Petts Wood and Bexley. It is evident that the species has become increasingly common over the past few years not only in north-west Kent but also in Berkshire where Ian Sims has found it in a number of localities. It is probable that *falconipennella* is always bivoltine but that this has only become apparent during a period of exceptional abundance; nevertheless, the possibility that the occurrence of two generations in Britain has been brought about by warm conditions in recent times cannot be ruled out.

#### References

- Emmet, A.M., 1985, in Heath, J. (ed.). *The Moths and Butterflies of Great Britain and Ireland* 2. Harley Books, Colchester.  
 —, 1988. *A Field Guide to the Smaller British Moths*. Second Edition. BENHS.  
 Kuznetsov, V.I., 1990, in Medvedev, G.S. *Keys to the insects of the European part of the USSR IV Lepidoptera*, Part 2. pp. 199-410.

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#### Notes on the Scarlet Tiger *Callimorpha dominula* (Linnaeus) (Lep.: Arctiidae) occurring on Salisbury Plain in Wiltshire

During the evening of 22 June 1993 whilst my brother and I were running m.v. lights at Tilshead (SU0349) on Salisbury Plain we were rather surprised to find an extremely fresh *C. dominula* in one of the traps. Naturally there was some speculation as to where the specimen may have originated. At the time the nearest possible localities appeared to be not less than ten kilometres (six miles) to the east and fourteen kilometres (eight miles) to the south.

Some time later whilst in conversation with Mr Stephen Palmer, who at the time was still resident in Wiltshire, he informed me that he and John Langmaid had encountered a specimen near Shrewton Folly (SU097482) on 5 July 1987. This is the first recorded occurrence of *C. dominula* on the dry chalk of Salisbury Plain of which I am aware.

During the first week of April 1995 as I was passing Shrewton Folly (SU094484) my attention was taken by extremely attractive overhanging boughs of blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) in full bloom. I immediately thought that a session of beating the branches might reward me with a record of